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W. H. W. H. W. H.

AN

ELEGY

FOR

THE CRYSTAL PALACE,

ADAPTED FROM GRAY.

Supposed to be written in Hyde Park, 31st May, 1852.

Wilful waste makes woeful want,
And all may live to say,
We wish that we had never let
This building pass away.

OLD SAW.

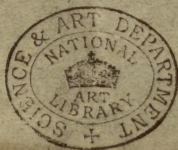
LONDON:

HOULSTON & STONEMAN, 65, PATERNOSTER ROW,

AND

GALL & INGLIS, EDINBURGH.

M,DCCCLII.



26.11.67.

HECK AND STRAKER, PRINTERS, VIII, BILLITER STREET,
FENCHURCH STREET.

HR
30.5.96

Dedicated

RESPECTFULLY

TO

SIR JOSEPH PAXTON,

AND

TO ALL THE ADMIRERS AND SUPPORTERS

OF

THE CRYSTAL PALACE,

WHICH INCLUDES

EVERY INDIVIDUAL OF SENSE AND TASTE ;

ALSO

TO ALL ITS HATERS,

IN THE HOPE

THAT IT MAY AID THE EFFORTS OF THE FIRST,

TO PRESERVE IT FOR

USEFUL AND ORNAMENTAL PURPOSES

TO THE NATION ;

AND TO THE LATTER, THAT IT MAY OVERCOME

THEIR STUPID PREJUDICES,

AND LEAD THEM TO REGARD IT,

AS IT IS

A GLORY AND AN HONOR TO THE PEOPLE

WHO POSSESS IT.

Engraved

RESPECTFULLY

TO

SIR JOSEPH PAXTON

AND

TO ALL THE ADMIRERS AND SUPPORTERS

OF

THE GREAT BRASS

WHICH INCLUDES

EVERY INDIVIDUAL OF SENSE AND TASTE

ALSO

TO ALL ITS HATERS

IN THE WORLD

THAT IT MAY AID THE PROGRESS OF THE FIRST

TO PRESENT IT FOR

USEFUL AND ORNAMENTAL PURPOSES

TO THE NATION

AND TO THE LATTER, THAT IT MAY OVERCOME

THEIR STUPID PREJUDICES

AND LEAD THEM TO REGARD IT

AS IT IS

A GIFT AND AN HONOR TO THE PEOPLE

WHO POSSESS IT

PREFACE.

THE only apology for attempting to parody
GRAY's beautiful Elegy, must be the anxious
desire of the Author to assist in preserving
that useful and splendid building—THE
CRYSTAL PALACE, for the benefit of the
public.

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CRYSTAL PALACE, for the benefit of the

public.

AN ELEGY,

Supposed to be written in Hyde Park,

31st of MAY, 1852.

THE Curfew tolls the knell of fading May,
The Crystal Palace we no more shall see,
The Lord of Public Works has had his way,
And left the Park to darkness and to me.

So fades the glittering landscape from the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Even where fashion wheels her drony flight,
And drowsy lap-dogs sleep on velvet folds

Alas ! that antiquated rage did tower,
Or moped, as owls do to the moon complain,
That they who wander'd near the crystal bower,
Molested their old solitary reign.

Beneath these ~~green~~ clad elms, its roof did shade,
Sat England's noble Queen,—her subjects' pride ;
Albert, whose princely mind the building made,
Stood on that day triumphant by her side.

The rosy calm of incense breathing morn,
Upon its glories will no more be shed ;
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more for *this* shall rouse them from their bed.

For us no more bright science there shall shine,
Or busy industry display her care ;
Arts' treasures glitter in their forms divine,
That all the world their brilliant charms may share.

(The few — to public will must ever yield ;

A nation's *will* can brook no galling yoke :

When Wisdom guards it with her sacred shield,

The few must bow beneath her potent stroke.)

Let not a selfish few mock useful toil,

Its struggles hard, and destiny obscure ;

Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile

That great minds often sink thro' being poor.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to them the fault,

That they no more their useful trophies raise,

Where thro' the long drawn isle and sunlit vault

The pealing anthem swell'd a Sovereign's praise.

The boast of Anglia—the proof of pow'r,

And all that beauty, all that peace once gave,

Have felt, alas ! th' inevitable hour,

And all is blank, and silent as the grave.

No treasur'd gem, or animated bust,

Delight the eye—or win a laurel wreath :—

Its glories now are level with the dust—

History, in wrath, laments its wasteful death !

Genius sublime is with this ruin laid ;

Hearts that are pregnant with celestial fire ;

Hands that the love of sculpture might have sway'd,

And wak'd to ecstasy some living lyre !

Once knowledge to our eyes her ample page,

Rich with the spoils of time did there unrol ;

Chill penury forgot its wants to gaze,

Big with delight and ecstasy of soul.

Here many a gem of purest ray serene

Did all the glories of its beauties wear ;

Many a flower that else had blush'd unseen,

Displayed its sweetness in its genial air.

Some village Arkwright with an anxious breast
Near to his model all expectant stood ;
Some else in glorious Phidias show'd his best,
And Peace proclaim'd the sin of shedding blood.

Oh ! why did not the People's voice command
England to save what other lands would prize ?
That arts sublime within its space might stand :
And show their history to a nation's eyes ?

Where splendour reign'd, now ruin stands alone—
The few in power its brilliant form resign'd,
O'erlook'd the wish that play'd around the throne,
And shut the gates of art upon mankind ;

The beauteous forms of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the struggles of the mind for fame,
Oh, curse the baneful luxury and pride,
That clos'd the shrine where science lit the flame.

Far from the happy scene's artistic strife,
The sons of science never wish'd to stray ;
Along the busy maze of humming life
They kept the joyful tenor of their way.

Yet e'en this spot from insult to protect,
No slight memorial's erected nigh,
Tho' art and splendour once its greensward deck'd,
Its only tribute's now a passing sigh.

Its name, its months, its space alone amuse
The place of fame—now eulogies supply :
Thus many a foolish pretext ruin strews,
Where beauty once was wont to greet the eye.

Blame those who dumb left all an easy prey,
An anxious nation's wish to pride resign'd—
As falls the curtain o'er departing May,
I cast one long'ng, ling'ring look behind.

On some fond breast the nation's soul relied,
But e'en the Senate lack'd its wonted fires;
Tho' at thy ruin indignation cried,
And men unborn will blame their simple sires.

For thee, who mindful of th' unhonor'd deed,
Dost think these lines a truthful tale relate;
Who grief and contemplation hither lead,
Will of some kindred soul inquire its fate.

Haply some hoary headed man will say,
"Oft did I see the Queen at peep of dawn,
Brushing with stately steps the dews away
To view the building in the early morn.

There at the foot of yonder nodding tree,
That writhes its old fantastic roots awry,
Her queenly form my loving eyes did see—
And here the crystal fountain sparkled high.

Here stood the transept—the nave ran east and west:

Viewing its brilliant form I oft did rove ;

Now drooping woeful wan I tell the rest,

They levell'd that bright home of peace and love.

The morn I miss'd it—with an aching breast

I walk'd its space, and gaz'd upon each tree :

It was no more—my soul would take no rest,

The form was gone that millions rush'd to see.

'Tis gone—the selfish few have had their way ;

No more it meets the early blush of morn :

Sing dirges—with their names let censure play,

Until they curse the day that they were born."

EPITAPH.

Oh ! once there stood upon this lap of earth,
A glorious building to the wide world known ;
Fair science frown'd not on its mighty birth,
And peace and beauty mark'd it for their own.

Large was its space, the public mind sincere
Would keep the building for a use profound ;
Britannia o'er its ruin shed a tear,
To see its costly form raz'd to the ground.

Oh, farther seek its merits to disclose,
And draw its haters from their vile abode ;
Let not their memory rest in repose,
Who frown'd on that o'er which had smil'd our God.

THE

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5. The fifth of the
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